Insecticide contents in fishes

3672. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ICAR scientists have found that popular fish like Rohu, Mangur, Singhi, etc. are showing high quantities of toxic insecticides like aldrin, endosulphan, DDT and DDE;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these insecticides form another dangerous chemical heterochloro hexane;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to save consumers of these fishes from the adverse effects of these insecticides?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The studies have shown that toxic insecticides like aldrin, endosulphan, DDT and DDE in fish like Rohu are not high in quantity and normally below 300 ppb (total organochlorine pesticides), *i.e.* below safe limits as per US FDA guidelines. However, the data for fishes like Mangur and Singhi, etc. are not available.

(b) and (c) Hexachlorocyclohexane (HCH or BHC) is the chemical name of the marketed compound, lindane and is not related to insecticides like aldrin, endosulphan, DDT and DDE.

(d) Since the detected organochlorine pesticide residues in fish samples are below the permissible limit, they are safe for human consumption, with regard to pesticide residues.

Review of the performance of agriculture sector

3673. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce reforms in agriculture sector to improve investments;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have reviewed, of late, the overall performance of this sector; and

(d) if so, the major findings of such a review?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) (a) and (b) Several policy initiatives have been taken to encourage investment in the agriculture sector. Major thrust areas include agricultural marketing infrastructure, agriculture extension, credit availability, diversification and risk coverage through crop Insurance. Public private participation is also encouraged in some of these areas. Other support services include grading, standardization and quality certification. Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act has been amended in many States to create a lawful space for private sector in market development and contract farming, and to encourage procurement of agricultural commodities directly from farmer's field and establish effective linkage between farm production and retail chain.

- To bring about reforms in the existing agricultural extension system in the country a new scheme called 'The Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA)' for support to State extension programme is implemented at district level. Out of the proposed 252 districts across the country to be covered under this scheme, ATMAs have been constituted in 234 districts.

- A comprehensive credit policy package is extended to the farmers by the Government by way of enhancing agricultural credit flow by 30 percent every year including provision of debt relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities. Following are the priority measures in the institutional credit situation:

  (i) Debt restructuring for farmers in distress and farmers in arrears by provision of rescheduling outstanding loans over a period of 5 years including moratorium of 2 years.

  (ii) Special one time settlement scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers.

  (iii) Financial assistance by the banks to the farmers to redeem their loans from moneylenders.

  (iv) From 2006-07, farmers would receive crop loans upto principal amount of Rs. 3 lakhs at 7 percent.

(v) In regard to small borrowers having no necessary assets as collateral, the banks have been advised to waive margin/security requirement for agricultural loans upto Rs. 50,000.

(vi) To improve the access of farmers to bank credit for production purposes, Kisan Credit Card has been introduced to simplify the credit delivery mechanism and to provide more flexibility in the use of credit.

- In order to promote diversification of agriculture from cereals to non-cereal crops, especially horticulture crops and to increase farm income, National Horticulture Mission having backward and forward linkages covering research, production, post-harvest management and marketing under one umbrella is launched and is under implementation.

(c) and (d) The Planning Commission in its Mid-Term Appraisal of Tenth Five Year Plan (2002—07) have reviewed the overall performance of economy including the agriculture sector. In its review, it was pointed out that there was decleration in growth. Further, according to entimates released by Central Statistical Organisation (SCO) with revised base year of 1999-2000, the overall performance in terms of growth of agricultural GDP during the first four years of Tenth Five Year Plan period (2002—2006) was 1.8 percent as against the average annual growth target of 4 percent. The shortfall in the achievement of targeted growth rate of 4 percent was mainly due to weather related conditions including failure of monsoon. Since only about 40 percent of the net sown area is under assured irrigation, agriculture growth is dependent on the rainfall and its geographical spread. Decline in public investment in the agriculture and allied sectors has also been observed over the year. It declined in real terms (at 1993-94 prices) from Rs. 25298 crore in Eighth Plan to Rs. 23625 crore in the Ninth Plan.

According to the data released by CSO, investment in terms of Gross Capital Formation (GCF) at 1999-2000 prices given in the Table below shows an increasing trend in public sector investment from 2002-03.

Trends in Gross Capital Formation in Agriculture including Allied Sectors of Forestry, Logging and Fishing.

(Rs. Crores at 1999-2000 prices)

Year	Public	%share in GDP	Private	%share GDP	Total	%share GDP
2002-03	8595	0.39	45979	2.07	54574	2.46
2003-04	14178	0.59	42076	1.75	56254	2.34
2004-05 (Provisional)	15904	0.61	36935	1.41	52839	2.02

New schemes under ARI

3674. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering/implementing any new schemes for Agro and Rural Industries in the current year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Central Government has recently approved the Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI). This Scheme envisages the development of 100 clusters in the Khadi, Coir and Village Industries Sector over five years. The guidelines of SFURTI are available on the website of the Ministry of Agro and Rural Industries at *http://ari.nic.in.*

Encouragement of high-income industries in rural India

3675. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any strategic steps to encourage high-income rural industries of wine, textiles, tourism and handicrafts in rural areas across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHAVIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Government in the Ministry of Agro and Rural